



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO COUPLES PLEAD GUILTY TO ROLES IN BANK ROBBERY

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that in Waco, Texas, two couples pled guilty to federal charges in connection with the September 25, 2004, robbery of First State Bank Central Texas in Academy, Texas.

Appearing before Chief United States District Judge Walter S. Smith, Jr., this afternoon, Luisa Marie Friedrich, Adam Christopher Edwards and Melissa Joy Edwards each pled guilty to one count of bank robbery. Luisa Friedrich's husband, former Gatesville Police officer Wesley John Friedrich, pled guilty to accessory after the fact (bank robbery). By pleading guilty, Luisa Friedrich and the Edwards' admitted to stealing \$76,000 from the financial institution. Adam Edwards initiated the robbery by brandishing a gun to a teller and forcing his way in to the bank. Luisa Friedrich, a former employee of the bank, assisted Edwards in removing the money from the vault as well as the tape from the surveillance videotape recorder. After the robbery, Adam Edwards and Luisa Friedrich traveled to a pre-determined location where they abandoned their get-away vehicle, changed clothes and met Melissa Edwards. A few days later, the trio, together with then Gatesville Police officer Wesley Friedrich, took the robbery proceeds, placed them in a safe and buried the safe on Wesley Friedrich's grandfather's farm in Salado, Texas. Eventually, the defendants dug up the money and used it for personal purchases.

"Americans must have confidence that their money is safe in our banks. Our office will continue to aggressively prosecute and punish anyone who robs a bank. That a police officer helped these bank robbers is particularly disappointing," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton.

Luisa Friedrich and Adam Edwards remain in federal custody; Wesley Friedrich and Melissa Edwards are on bond pending sentencing. Wesley Friedrich faces up to 12 and a half years in federal prison; each of the other three defendants, up to 25 years in federal prison. Sentencing is scheduled for 1:00pm on September 28, 2005.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation together with the Texas Rangers, Bell County Sheriff's Office and Little River-Academy Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Greg Gloff is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

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